

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed August 14, 2003, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration. In the Office Action, claims 1-17 were rejected. No amendments have been made to the Specification or the claims. Accordingly, claims 1-17 remain pending in this application.

Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagami et al. in view of Yener et al. The examiner states that Nagami discloses a firewall for transferring message packets from an external network to a local area network including a message receiver, a message transmitter and a message processor for processing a message packet to provide a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum length for message packets transferred over the local area network. The examiner states that, although Nagami does not detail maximum length as maximum path length, Yener teaches maximum route length and therefore, it would have been obvious to combine Nagami and Yener to arrive at the claimed invention. This rejection is respectfully traversed as Yener does not teach adjusting a portion of a message packet according to a maximum path length and therefore, the combination of Nagami and Yener is improper and does not teach the claimed invention.

Independent claim 1 recites a firewall for transferring message packets from an external network to a local area network, at least one of the message packets including a time to live field including a time to live value, the firewall comprising:

- A. a message receiver configured to receive the at least one of the message packets from the external network;
- B. a message processor configured to process the at least one message packet to provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network; and
- C. a message transmitter configured to transmit the at least one message packet as processed by the message processor over the local area network.

Although Nagami briefly refers to reducing TTL or time to live, carried out by the datagram processing unit, Nagami offers no details whatsoever as to how this is done or to what the TTL is reduced. The examiner has admitted that "Nagami did not detail maximum length as maximum path length." In fact, however, Nagami does not provide any details as to the maximum length of the TTL, either before it is reduced or after. The only references to TTL by Nagami are in Col. 16, line 53 and Col. 27, line 22. Nagami only states that the TTL is reduced.

The examiner relies on Yener for the proposition that it would have been obvious to modify Nagami to incorporate maximum route length as taught Yener. However, Yener does not teach modifying a field of a message packet in order to dictate the maximum path length for the message packet. The Yener system has nothing to do with modifying message packets. The Yener system is directed to construction of networks while keeping the degree of each node of the network constant. See page 14, lines 5-22. Yener explicitly states that his objective is to design networks with a constrained number of links for engineering purposes (page 14, lines 12-13). His construction method involves a scaling formula to determine optimal characteristics of a particular network. Yener does not address in any way the configuration of the message packets that are transferred throughout the network. When Yener refers to a maximum route length, he is referring to the dimensional relationship between nodes of a network, which has nothing to do with the time to live of a message packet.

Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 1 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 1 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local area network. Therefore independent claim 1 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6 depend from independent claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 1.

Independent claim 7 recites a device for generating and transmitting at least one message packet over a network, the at least one message packet including a time to live field including a time to live value, the device comprising:

- A. a message generator configured to generate the at least one message packet and provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network; and
- B. a message transmitter configured to transmit the at least one message packet as generated by the message generator over the network.

As set forth above, Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 7 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 7 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local area network. Therefore independent claim 7 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 8 recites a method of transferring message packets from an external network to a local area network, at least one of the message packets including a time to live field including a time to live value, the method comprising:

- A. receiving the at least one of the message packets from the external network;
- B. processing the at least one message packet to provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network; and
- C. transmitting the at least one message packet as processed by the message processor over the local area network.

As set forth above, Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 8 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 8 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local area network. Therefore independent claim 8 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Claims 9-13 depend from independent claim 8 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 8.

Independent claim 14 recites a method of generating and transmitting at least one message packet over network, the at least one message packet including a time to live field including a time to live value, the device comprising:

- A. generating the at least one message packet and provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network; and
- B. transmitting the at least one message packet as generated by the message generator over the network

As set forth above, Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 14 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 14 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local

area network. Therefore independent claim 14 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 15 recites a computer program product for use in connection with a computer to provide a firewall for transferring message packets from an external network to a local area network, at least one of the message packets including a time to live field including a time to live value, the computer program product comprising a computer-readable medium having encoded thereon a message processor module configured to enable the computer process the at least one message packet to provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network.

As set forth above, Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 15 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 15 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local area network. Therefore independent claim 15 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Claim 16 depends from independent claim 15 and is allowable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 15.

Independent claim 17 recites a computer program product for use in connection with a computer to provide a device for generating and transmitting at least one message packet over network, the at least one of the message packet including a time to live field including a time to live value, the computer program product comprising a computer-readable medium having encoded thereon a message generator configured to generate the at least one message packet and provide, in the time to live field, a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the local area network.

As set forth above, Nagami does not teach or suggest in any way that the time to live of a message packet can be modified to limit the message packet to a maximum path length and Yener is not at all concerned with the configuration of the message packet being transferred through his system. Accordingly, the combination of the two references certainly cannot teach the invention recited in independent claim 17 which recites, among other features, providing "a time to live value selected to be related to a maximum path length for message packets transferred over the network". Furthermore, Nagami is solely directed to routers within a LAN, while the invention recited in independent claim 17 is directed to a firewall which transfers message packets from an external network to a local area network. Therefore independent claim 17 is allowable over the combination cited by the examiner and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant asserts that pending claims 1-17 are allowable over the prior art of record and respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this application.

In the event the Examiner deems personal contact desirable in the disposition of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at 508.293.7835.

Please charge any fees occasioned by this submission to Deposit Account No. 05-0889.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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